

Weekly Update | November 11, 2022

Elizabeth G. Loba, Ph.D. Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs

Dear Faculty and Staff,

These weekly updates will serve as a tool to keep you informed and engaged with SMU's Academic Affairs, together, we work toward achieving the goals that fall within our four priority areas through 2025: 1) Academic Excellence/US News and World Report top 50, 2) Road to R1: Research and Scholarly/Creative Excellence, 3) 2016-2025 Strategic Plan and 4) Inclusive Excellence.

If you have suggestions for what we should include in future communications, please send your ideas to [this email address](#). Previous newsletters are available [here](#).

Today's update falls into three categories: 1) Fall 2022, 2) Road to R1: Research and Scholarly/Creative Excellence, and 3) News and Notes.

east Residential Commons

Throughout the week, tremendous effort has been made to repair a leak that rendered toilets inoperable in southeast residential commons. As of this morning, crews had restored operations and the toilets are now operational throughout the complex. The students from Armstrong and Crum Commons who were relocated to hotels were informed this morning that they could return to their campus residences. The return process will take some time, as some students likely arrived back on campus classes this morning before learning that they could check out of the hotels.

Please continue to provide flexibility to students in your courses today, Monday and Tuesday, recognizing disruption of moving in and out of hotels and related lack of sleep may have interrupted their studies and preparation for classes.

The facilities team worked round-the-clock to resolve this issue, and appreciates the patience demonstrated by the SMU community.

Common Curriculum Update: Making it Easier to Administer and Fulfill the "Writing in the Major" Proficiency

SMU faculty have consistently expressed concern about the challenges of isolating the teaching of Writing in the Major to a single course, since many programs distribute the teaching and practice of writing across a program. For the same reason, students on the Common Curriculum have struggled to find sufficient opportunities to fulfill the Writing in the Major requirement, even when they have spent several courses writing in accordance with the parameters of their discipline.

For this reason, on September 9, 2022, the [Council on General Education](#) approved a proposal to change how the [Common Curriculum Writing in the Major Proficiency and Experience](#) is tracked on the Degree Progress Report and replace it with one program level Writing in the Major student learning outcome.

Effective November 11 the Writing in the Major Proficiency and Experience graduation requirement was removed from the Degree Progress Report for student tracking, and in fall 2023, we will begin tracking it through program learning outcomes and program level assessment.

This approved change honors the true intent of the Writing in the Major Proficiency and values the tremendous work done by faculty to develop [Witt](#) tagged courses, learning outcomes, and assessments. During transition to this new method of tracking and assessing Writing in the Major, the [Office of Institutional Planning and Effectiveness](#) will work closely with faculty and programs to write discipline specific learning outcomes for Writing in the Major and to develop appropriate measures to assess this writing.

University Testing Center receives National College Testing Association Certification

SMU's [University Testing Center \(UTC\)](#) is now a certified testing center by the [National College Testing Association \(NCTA\)](#). The certification is a rigorous, one-year accreditation process granted to those centers whose test administration policies are compliant with testing industry standards developed by the NCTA. Centers are evaluated using criteria from the NCTA's Professional Standards and Guidelines, which focus on the evaluation of test facility, test integrity methods, test security, confidentiality practices, staff training, and public relations. Special thanks to Lori Krone, UTC Manager, for her leadership through the certification process. [Learn more about this certification](#) or the [services offered by the UTC](#).

Road to R1/Scholarly and Creative Excellence

Call for Proposals for FY 2024 Congressional Earmark/Appropriation Process

As mentioned in [last week's email](#) we invite faculty to develop proposals for consideration as a part of the U.S. Congress' FY 2024 earmark and/or appropriate process.

This [LINK](#) will take you to a box folder where you may view and copy resources provided by during last week's federal research workshop: (1) A copy of the presentation shown by our consultants and (2) a template
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The Opening of SMU's AT&T Center for Virtualization's Intelligent Systems and Bias Examination Lab (ISaBEL) Featured Locally and Nationally

A new lab at SMU's AT&T Center for Visualization investigates how facial recognition and other artificial intelligence systems perform on diverse populations. [Dallas Innovates](#), [Biometric Update](#), and [Datanami](#) have recently covered the lab's opening.

Sincerely,

Elizabeth G. Lobo, PhD

Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs

Southern Methodist University

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